

Conference Abstract

ALERT Lessons From A Biosecurity Disaster

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Abstract

The Managers of Australasian Herbarium Collections (MAHC) have been working with the Plant Import Operations Branch of the Australian government Department of Agriculture and Water Resources (DAWR) to align our procedures to significantly reduce the risk of herbarium specimens being destroyed when being imported into Australia. The two groups worked together productively to bring about change and to enable the resumption of the international movement of herbarium specimens after two recent international disasters. These changes include amendments to the Biosecurity Import Conditions System (BICON) which contains the Australian government's import conditions and onshore outcomes for herbarium specimens, changes to procedures at the border (airmail gateway facilities) where biosecurity documentation is assessed and parcels released, and updates to existing herbarium parcel labels, guidelines and supplier declaration templates. We will discuss lessons learned, as well as implications for researchers, collections managers or institutions who may be sending herbarium specimen material to Australia.

This is a presentation on behalf of the Managers of Australasian Herbarium Collections (MAHC), a network of herbarium Collection Managers in Australia and New Zealand.

Keywords

Biosecurity, Loans, Exchange, Disaster Management, Risk Assessment, Labels, Templates

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